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PROSTITUTION IN PARIS:

DR. CHAPMAN'S REPLIES TO THE REMARKS OF

M. LE FORT AND MR. BERKELEY HILL,

ON CERTAIN PASSAGES IN THE ARTICLES ON PROSTITUTION

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PROSTITUTION

IN RELATION TO THE NATIONAL HEALTH.

See the Second Edition of THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW.
(New Series.)

No. LXXI. for JULY, 1869, Price 6s.

"A detailed, and, on the whole, able exposition of the subject of prostitution and its results. * * * It lays open to its readers the stores of information which modern research has accumulated on this disheartening topic. * * * The review in question is not only an able one—it is a thoroughly earnest one. There is no paudering to vicious taste in it, no indulgence in the flippancy of expression which so often marks disquisitions of this kind. It is in sober earnest. He admits to some extent the impropriety, but justifies himself by the assertion that the plan which he has taken is the only efficient one. "Thus," he writes, 'the social malady which we now purpose to discuss is vitally interesting to woman, it affects her both as a wife and as a mother; and, while destroying the health of herself and of the dearest objects of her affections, too often blights those affections themselves. Suffering as she does from its effects, shall she be restrained by conventional prohibitions, or even by her own sensitive delicacy, from manifesting her interest in it, from exerting her influence at once to repress it and to remove its causes, or from labouring in every possible way to place herself and those related to her out of danger? On the contrary, we believe that this is specially one of those subjects which it is her solemn duty to examine for herself.'"—*British Medical Journal*, Oct. 23rd, 1869.

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PROSTITUTION:

GOVERNMENTAL EXPERIMENTS IN CONTROLLING IT.

Reprinted from THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW (New Series),

No. 73, Jan., 1870.

"The article is ably written, and altogether is one which deserves to be read and pondered over at a time when extended efforts at the control of prostitution by the state are in contemplation. * * * The Reviewer objects to everything approaching compulsory surveillance on this among other grounds, that it is 'the practical expression of a conviction which implies despair of social progress, as well as the acceptance of harlotry as an everlasting accompaniment of civilization, and which, therefore, virtually gives the lie to that vital principle of christianity constituting its very essence.'"—*Medical Times and Gazette*, Jan. 15, 1870.

"Probably the most valuable essay in this number of the *Review*. If the reader learns nothing else from its perusal, he will at least acquire a very convincing notion of the immense difficulty of the statesman's task who has to grapple with this subject. The essayist promises to state in April his exposition of 'the policy of justice and common sense in this matter,' and in the meantime we believe that every thinker who desires a clear view of the whole question in its breadth and complicated relations has the proper material before him in the view here given of what the 'Governmental experiments' have resulted in."—*Western Daily Press*, Jan. 26, 1870.

PROSTITUTION:

HOW TO DEAL WITH IT.

See THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW (New Series), No. LXXIV for
April, 1870.

London: TRUBNER AND Co., 60 Paternoster Row, E.C.

PROSTITUTION IN PARIS:

DOCTOR CHAPMAN'S REPLY TO M. LE FORT.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Lancet*.

SIR,—In your issue of May 28th, and under the title,—“A Distinguished French Surgeon's Opinion of the Contagious Diseases Act,” you have published a letter which Mr. Acton, who forwarded it to you, designates a “scientific contribution from M. Le Fort, a Parisian surgeon of eminence, and who has himself been employed by the French Government in carrying out the laws relating to Contagious Diseases in Paris.” The statements of a man of M. Le Fort's eminence command attention, and as he has done me the honour of devoting his long letter to a critical comment on certain articles contributed by me to the *Westminster Review*, and as that comment, unless replied to, is likely to produce grave misapprehension to my prejudice, I shall feel obliged if you will publish the following remarks which I regret to have been unable to send to you until to-day. M. Le Fort says :—“Refusing to admit the advantage of extending to the civil population measures rendered legal by the Contagious Diseases Act, the author ought to have endeavoured to show that similar measures have not produced any useful effect in countries where they have been carried out.”

In the first place I must observe that the Contagious Diseases Act has never been applied to any but the “civil population.” Estimating all the indirect as well as the direct effects of the Contagious Diseases Acts, I maintain that they conduce to the development of more venereal disease (by means of clandestine prostitution), than they extinguish (in registered prostitutes); therefore instead of approving the proposal to extend those Acts to an additional part or to the whole of the civil population, I hold

* Nearly the whole of the following reply to M. Le Fort was published in the *Lancet* of June 18th; the parts which, with the writer's consent, the editor of the *Lancet* omitted, owing to want of space, were restored to their places, and the whole letter, as originally written, was afterwards published in the *Medical Mirror*.

that from the point of view of the physician alone (regardless of social and moral considerations), experience proves that they are a political mistake, and that they ought to be erased from the statute-book altogether. I freely admit that those prostitutes who are subject to, and retained under, enforced sanitary control, both on the Continent and in England, are less diseased than those who are not; but I have proved by a copious array of evidence in respect to several Continental cities that measures similar to the Contagious Diseases Acts, while lessening the amount of venereal diseases *in the small number* of prostitutes under control, increase immensely the amount of those diseases *in the incomparably larger number* of those who are not and who cannot be got under control—viz., the so-called clandestine prostitutes, wherever those measures have been carried out. In Paris, for example, according to the highest authority on the subject in that city, the clandestine prostitutes amount to at least 26,000 women, “who, on account of their habitual debauchery, are a danger to the public health,” whereas the number under sanitary control in the same city on the 1st of January last was only 3,656.

M. Le Fort says that “as regards France, it is only at the cost of numerous errors that the author has been able to avail himself of this line of argument. I shall only mention the most important.” He then proceeds: “To show that there is more syphilis in Paris than in London, Dr. Chapman relies upon the fact that we have in special hospitals 806 beds especially appropriated to the venereal diseases of both sexes. This proof is far from having the value that the writer attributed to it.”

I must respectfully deny that there is any passage in any of my articles which can be construed into an attempt “to show that there is more syphilis in Paris than in London;” indeed I have instituted no comparison whatever of the two cities in respect to the amount of venereal disease prevailing in them. The significance of the fact that in special hospitals at Paris “806 beds are especially appropriated to the venereal diseases of both sexes” will no doubt be estimated differently by different persons. In my article I have valued the fact of the existence of those beds as evidence that in Paris, where the system of enforced sanitary surveillance of prostitutes is applied as effectually as it is ever likely to be anywhere, those beds are nevertheless required for and occupied by venereal patients, and it will be difficult to show, I think, that I was not justified in using the fact for that purpose.

M. Le Fort continues:—“This is not all, for, according to Dr. Chapman, these numerous beds do not yet suffice. A great number of venereal patients are taken care of in the ordinary hospitals, and that contrary to the rules.”

The reader of course expects that M. Le Fort has quoted this

statement in order to contradict it ; but, instead of doing so, he quotes additional passages from my articles—passages explaining how venereal patients get admission into ordinary hospitals, and then says :—"There are in these remarks many errors," a comment which he endeavours to justify. Every one of my "remarks" in which I am surprised to learn there are many errors, is but a repetition of statements made in the third edition of Parent-Duchatelet's celebrated work. This edition, published in 1857, is edited by MM. A. Trebuchet and Poirat-Duval, the one *Chef du Bureau Sanitaire*, and *Secrétaire du Conseil de Salubrité* ; the other, *Chef de Bureau à la Préfecture de Police*. These gentlemen, especially qualified by their official knowledge and experience to discharge their editorial labours efficiently, seem, in fact, to have done so ; therefore, though M. Le Fort's personal experience may lead him to believe there are "many errors" in the remarks he adverts to, I am inclined to believe each of these remarks is substantially correct. But if they are not, the fault lies at the door of those gentlemen. And, after all, each of the points in question, except that of the number of venereal patients in the general hospitals of Paris, has only a slight bearing on the question of the working and effects of the system of sanitary control of prostitutes in Paris. Respecting the number of venereal patients in those hospitals, Parent-Duchatelet says :—"I believe myself justified in affirming that about a fifth of the total number of venereal patients are treated in hospitals other than the Lourcine and the Midi." These words are on page 97 of vol ii. of the third edition, and are unaccompanied by any correctional note by his editors. This statement fully warranted me in saying :—"It thus appears that the total number of beds occupied by venereal patients in the special and general hospitals of Paris is altogether fully 1,000, and this notwithstanding the elaborate, costly, and tyrannical machinery of sanitary surveillance we have described." But now I learn, on the authority of M. Le Fort himself, that I have greatly understated the actual fact. So great has been the progress made since Parent-Duchatelet wrote that all the general hospitals now freely admit venereal patients. "During the twenty years that I have been attached to the hospitals of Paris," M. Le Fort says, "I have never noticed a single instance in which the civil administration has refused admission to a patient should she suffer under syphilitic disease, except in the case unfortunately too frequent—namely, the patient not habitually residing in Paris ; but this exclusion applies to all, whatever be the disease, except in a case of emergency." I am thankful for this important and authoritative fortification of my argument, which I can now safely shape into this corrected form : In Paris all the general hospitals freely admit syphilitic patients,

and 806 beds in special hospitals are also appropriated to patients of this class. These facts prove that there is an enormous amount of venereal disease in Paris notwithstanding the constant and vigilant application to Paris prostitutes of the system of enforced sanitary supervision which has long been practised there, but which, judged by its fruits, seems worse than useless.

M. Le Fort points out that though in Paris so many beds are occupied by venereal patients, the proportion of venereal to ordinary patients is much less in Paris than in London. He says :—“Taking the in- and out-patients of the general hospitals, as well as the in- and out-patients of the Lock Hospitals, Du Midi and Lourcine, we may pretty accurately say there is only one venereal patient for every ten.

Now, Sir, I submit that, considering the special appropriation of 806 beds to venereal patients, and the free admission of such patients into the general hospitals, the fact that of all the patients in the several hospitals of Paris, ten per cent. are venereal, is a very appalling fact—a fact very far from testifying favourably of the system of enforced sanitary control of prostitutes practised in Paris, and equally far from encouraging us to adopt a like system in London. I concur in M. Le Fort's remark that “no one can accurately know” whether there is “more syphilis in Paris than in London ;” but I venture to express the opinion that if in London there were 806 beds in special hospitals for venereal patients, and if such patients were freely received as in-patients in all the general hospitals (as I think they ought to be, and as it seems they are in Paris), we should not then find that the venereal patients would constitute even an approach to ten per cent. of the whole number of patients who receive medical aid from the charitable institutions of this metropolis, although 806 beds in special hospitals would form a much less proportion to the population of London than they do to that of Paris. In making this remark I am of course supposing that the Contagious Diseases Acts are not applied to London ; I am not unmindful, however, that the application of these Acts at the numerous places to which they are now applied will cause many diseased prostitutes to flock to London in order to escape them, and will therefore to that extent vitiate the experiment.

In my article,—“Prostitution : How to Deal with it,” published in the *Westminster Review* for April, 1870, I quoted a passage from one of the letters of “Justina” respecting the comparative amount of disease in the English and French armies during the year 1862 ; and with reference to *that year and previous years*, the description contained in that passage of the mode in which the French army statistics were kept, is substantially correct. But, unfortunately, that passage contained

one grave error—an error which you yourself pointed out when adverting to “Justina’s” letters, and which, in so far as my article is concerned, I corrected by means of an “erratum” inserted in the *Westminster Review* before it was published. Had M. Le Fort seen that “erratum”—and it is not my fault that he did not—he might have been saved some trouble. And I beg to say that I have asserted nothing concerning “the special statistics of venereal patients” in France on my “own private authority;” and that though I quoted “Justina,” I did not do so until I had referred to the source of her statement—viz., a paper by Dr. Balfour published in the *Army Medical Report* for 1863. As I expressly state this fact in my article, M. Le Fort’s sarcasm about my “own private authority” has no point, and I am rather surprised, therefore, that he should have condescended to make use of it. Dr. Balfour’s statement made in 1863, that the French army statistics of venereal patients only give figures relating to patients entering the hospitals, and not to those treated at the infirmary, or *à la chambre*, is confirmed by M. Le Fort’s own words. He says:—“The French medical statistics *ever since the year* 1865 have given the number of venereal patients treated in the hospital, in the infirmary, and *à la chambre*.” It is clear, therefore, that *until that date* the recorded and published number of admissions to hospital of French soldiers on account of venereal diseases afforded no reliable data as a basis of comparison with the number of admissions to hospital of English soldiers on the same account; and this is what I contended for. But when referring to the question of the number of soldiers in each of the two armies rendered non-effective in 1862 by venereal disease, Dr. Balfour committed a clerical error. In giving the number of troops in the United Kingdom rendered non-effective during 1862, he stated the syphilitic group of cases only, and omitted the gonorrhæal group, amounting to 11·42 per 1,000. This is the error which was pointed out in the correctional note inserted in each copy of the *Westminster Review* for April, 1870.

And now a few words respecting M. Le Fort’s statement that “in 1866 there were 97 venereal patients in every 1,000 men” of the French army. He gives the *effective* force of that army as 336,233 men, among whom, as he says, there were 32,636 venereal patients. But in order to make a fair comparison of the number of admissions to hospital of French soldiers on account of venereal disease with the number of admissions of soldiers in the United Kingdom similarly affected, the French army of the interior ought alone to be considered, and the ratio of admissions ought to be calculated with reference, not to the “effective” strength, but to the number present, for a large number of French soldiers are constantly absent on leave. Now in 1866 the number

present was 229,761, and of these the number of admissions to hospital on account of venereal disease was 26,082, which is at the rate of 113·5 per 1,000—a ratio considerably higher than that given by M. Le Fort. This ratio represents the full advantage derived by French soldiers from the “Police Médicale” in full force in France, there being in Paris 806 beds specially appropriated to venereal patients, and all the general hospitals freely open to them meanwhile! I do not think this, even considered by itself, is a result for either M. Le Fort or the promoters of the Contagious Diseases Acts to boast of; but when it is borne in mind how enormous has been the development of clandestine prostitution, and therefore of venereal disease, secluded from observation among the civil population, in order to get that result, it will appear, I think, to impartial judges to be an inexpressibly costly one; and I hope and believe that Englishmen will decide that a like result is far too costly for them to purchase at a similar price.

It is not generally known, I believe, that during several recent years causes have been in operation, causes bearing chiefly, I apprehend, on the personal improvement of the English soldier, which have produced a great diminution in the number of admissions to hospital on account of venereal disease, irrespective of the working of the Contagious Diseases Acts. This will become strikingly manifest if I give from 1860 to 1866 the number of admissions at those stations where the Act of 1866 has been longest applied, and if I then state the number of admissions at the same places during the last three years. In the autumn of 1866 the Act was applied at Devonport and Plymouth, Portsmouth, Chatham and Sheerness, and Woolwich, and in April, 1867, it was applied at Aldershot. Now at those places before the Act was applied—viz., during the period from 1860 to 1866 inclusive, the average ratio of admissions fell from 421 per 1,000 in 1860 to 290 per 1,000 in 1866, or in the aggregate 131 per 1,000; whereas during the years 1867-68-69, while the Contagious Diseases Acts has been applied, the aggregate fall in the ratio of admissions has been only 92 per 1,000. Seeing that in those places no hospital accommodation for women suffering from venereal diseases existed before the Contagious Diseases Act came into operation, and that nevertheless there was a fall of 131 per 1,000 in the ratio of admissions, I do not hesitate to say that had there been adequate hospital accommodation the fall would have been very much greater, so that all the benefit alleged to be conferred on the soldiers by that Act would probably have been reaped by them, and while clandestine prostitution would not have been fostered, that wide diffusion of syphilis among the people which it always effects would not even have begun to take place.

M. Le Fort next says :—" Dr. Chapman wishes to show that the system [of enforced sanitary surveillance] is condemned in France—at least in its application, if not in its principle, and he debits me with having given utterance to opinions which I never entertained." Further on in his letter he says :—" The principal ideas that I profess with regard to prostitution have been briefly detailed in the English *Medical Times* for the 8th January." I am very glad to learn from himself that his " principal ideas " are authoritatively stated in that paper. Now in that paper, when referring to the measures adopted in Paris against syphilis, he says : " The insufficient results obtained would appear to annul the utility of the measures taken against prostitution by the administration." Again he says : " The results of these measures are altogether insufficient." And again he says : " It can easily be understood," giving his reasons why, " that these measures produce but little effect, and that the result, therefore, of the means employed against syphilis in Paris amount to nothing." After reading these authenticated extracts, your readers must judge whether or not the system of surveillance as now practised in France is not condemned by M. Le Fort at all events.

The fact is, the exposition of his views in the *Medical Times* is the exposition of the views of a man who, profoundly dissatisfied with the existing system, comes forward as a reformer and lays his proposals before the public ; and, like most other reformers, he preludes his proposals with a vigorous denunciation of the system he is anxious to reorganize. And after carefully reading over and over again that exposition of his views, and my representation of them, I fail altogether to discover in what respect I have misrepresented them ; however, if he will distinctly point out that I have in any respect done so, although unconsciously, I shall gladly acknowledge my mistake ; and meanwhile I beg to assure him that I strove both to apprehend and to express his views and proposals as correctly as I could. Unable to accuse myself of misinterpreting in any degree what he has said, I am forced to the conclusion that it is, in fact, my critical comments on his proposals which have prompted him to write the letter Mr. Acton has sent to you. But I believe I have throughout my remarks had scrupulous regard not only to truth, but to that courtesy which every man criticizing the views of another from whom he differs ought to observe ; and I cannot help thinking that when M. Le Fort calmly reconsiders the matter, he will himself give me credit for having done so. But this personal question is infinitely less important than the public one to which our discussion mainly refers. And I wish in a concluding paragraph to bring into prominence the chief points on which we differ.

Now, why does M. Le Fort condemn the system of sanitary

surveillance now practised in Paris? (1). Because it gets under control less than 4,000 women, while, as he says, "there exist in Paris 40,000 or 50,000 women who make a traffic of their persons;" (2). Because it does not subject even those under control to medical examination often enough; (3). Because the examinations are insufficiently made; (4). Because it permits registered prostitutes to walk the streets (certain special streets excepted) during certain hours; (5). and, finally, Because it allows a large number of even registered prostitutes to live in their own private apartments, instead of forcing all prostitutes, as M. Le Fort would do, to inhabit brothels (*maisons tolérées*). His first objection I heartily concur in; but he believes it possible to organize a system against which this objection cannot be urged. I do not. All the rest of his objections are only so many separate testimonies against the efficacy of the present system, and in favour of the general argument which I have advanced; and I maintain that wherever either that system or any other like to it is established, the ultimate result will be disastrous failure similar to that experienced in Paris now. There, as I have pointed out, the proportionate, and recently the actual, number of registered prostitutes is lessening, the number of brothels is lessening, and the number of girls living in them is lessening, but the number of clandestine prostitutes, whom even the Paris police cannot touch, is steadily and enormously increasing. M. Le Fort is thoroughly alive to the great danger which these clandestine prostitutes (the products of the system of police control) constitute: he knows they are the chief agents of the spread of syphilis in Paris; and he says, in effect, if only they could be got under control, all would be well. He dreams that they can be; and he believes his dream would be realized if every prostitute were compelled to become the inmate of a brothel. As he himself says, there are "40,000 or 50,000 women in Paris who make a traffic of their persons;" and as he advises that every woman convicted of clandestine prostitution should for the first offence be condemned to one year's medical visits and to the vigilance of the police, and for the second to inscription as "a public woman," and enforced residence in a brothel, my statement that he suggests "the appointment of a body of police sufficiently large to control 50,000 women, and the compulsory residence of all the prostitutes of Paris in brothels," seems to me a truthful expression of his plan. Whether this plan is likely to commend itself to any large body of Englishmen, or even of Frenchmen, I must now leave to the judgment of your readers.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

JOHN CHAPMAN, M.D.

25 Somerset Street, W., 14th June, 1870.

DR. CHAPMAN'S REPLY TO MR. BERKELEY HILL.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Medical Mirror*.

SIR,—Mr. Berkeley Hill, who finds that the facts and arguments adduced in an article on Prostitution published in the *Westminster Review* constitutes grave obstacles to the proposed extension of the Contagious Diseases Acts over the United Kingdom, now disputes the accuracy of a few of my statements in the hope of discrediting the whole. He has put forth a paper, consisting of four octavo pages, and entitled,—

“A FEW REMARKS on the Errors of the Article in the ‘*Westminster Review*’ on Prostitution: *Governmental Experiments in Controlling it*. BY JOHN CHAPMAN, M.D. Reprinted from the January Number of the ‘*Westminster Review*.’ Trübner and Co., London, 1870.”

As these “Remarks,” which he says “have shown what reliance can be placed on the arguments of the article” are being extensively circulated by the “Association for Promoting the Extension of the Contagious Diseases Acts to the Civil Population,” it seems to be necessary to state what is the exact value of the criticisms of that gentleman.

MR. BERKELEY HILL'S CRITICISM, NO. I.

“On page 47 the Reviewer says: ‘In Paris the treatment of venereal diseases is mainly restricted to three hospitals. One forms part of the *Maison de Saint-Lazaire*, which is under the administration of the prefecture of police, and which contains about 1,300 prostitutes, divided into three sections:—the first, prisoners; the second, patients; the third, young girls imprisoned in conformity with Articles 66 and 67 of the Penal Code, or by request of their parents. It thus appears that something like a fourth part of all the registered women in Paris are confined in *La Maison de Saint-Lazaire*! Usually the number of venereal patients in the hospital of this establishment is about 200.’

“M. Lecour, Chef du Bureau des Mœurs, whom Dr. Chapman allows to be an ‘especially trustworthy authority,’ himself writes as follows in the paper from which Dr. Chapman professes to quote:—

Of 3,861 women on the Police Register of Paris on the 1st January, 1867,—

47 were detained awaiting trial.

188 were undergoing punishment.

90 were in the sick wards.

34 were in various general hospitals for non-venereal complaints.

Total 359 in St. Lazaire.

Lecour, de la Prostitution et des mesures dont elle est l'objet à Paris. Archives Générales de Médecine, 1867. Tom. ii. p. 725.

* Reprinted from the *Medical Mirror* for July 1, 1870.

"These 359, for the rest of the 3,861 were at liberty, have, by the *Westminster* Reviewer, been multiplied into 1,300, 'or about one-fourth of the whole number of registered women in Paris.'"

The above remarks seem to imply that the *Maison de Saint-Lazaire* contained only 359 prostitutes on the 1st January, 1867, and that my statement that that establishment contains any such number as "about 1,300 prostitutes" is wholly without foundation. Now the exact words of Parent-Duchatelet, which are endorsed by his editors, M.M. Trebuchet et Poirat-Duval in the third edition of Parent-Duchatelet's work) are these:— "The *Maison de Saint-Lazaire* comprises a general population of about 1,300 *détenues* (women and girls forcibly detained) divided into three principal sections. The *first* contains the accused and condemned (*les prévenues et condamnées*); the *second* is at the same time a place of punishment and an hospital for prostitutes; the *third* is assigned to the young girls imprisoned in conformity with articles 66 and 67 of the Penal Code, or by request of their parents." M. Lecour, in his work published this year, says:— "The *Maison de Saint-Lazaire* contains about 1,100 *détenues*," or 200 less than was the case in 1857. It is true that inadvertently I committed an error in saying,— "it thus appears that something like a fourth part of all the *registered* women in Paris are confined in the *Maison de Saint-Lazaire*;" but though I did so, any one reading my statement of the facts on which that observation is founded is enabled at once to correct that error by means of the material with which I have supplied him. The last line of Mr. Berkeley Hill's figures given above which he professes to quote from Lecour—viz., "Total, 359 in St. Lazaire," comprises 34 women who "were in various general hospitals for non-venereal complaints;" it is therefore difficult to understand how they were at the same time "in St. Lazaire." If I give Mr. Hill the benefit of this deduction, it then appears that according to him there were at the date mentioned only 315 registered prostitutes in St. Lazaire. It is clear that Mr. Hill is acquainted with M. Lecour's book published this year, for he quotes it; and his readers have a right to expect that he should give them the latest information he possesses on the subject on which he writes. To do so, however, would not suit his purpose. Mr. Hill desires to make the English people believe that venereal disease in Paris is so successfully dealt with by the system of enforced sanitary surveillance of prostitutes practised there, that it behoves the English Government to apply that system, after it has been modified and improved in accordance with his suggestions, to the whole of the United Kingdom. Now I have shown that the amount of venereal disease in Paris is increasing, and of course evidence to this effect is not conducive to the attainment

of Mr. Berkeley Hill's object, therefore he suppresses it. According to the statement which he puts forward, there were only 315 registered prostitutes in St. Lazaire on the 1st January, 1867, and of these only "90 were in the sick wards." But, according to M. Lecour's statement, in his book published this year (page 65) of the 1,100 women and girls detained in St. Lazaire, *the registered prostitutes amount to 400, and of these 250 are ordinarily in the infirmary.* There are also, M. Lecour says, 100 very young prostitutes (*mineures*) who are not registered. Here, therefore, are 500 out of the 1,100 "*détenues*," who according to him (p. 64), as well as according to Parent-Duchatelet, are divided into three sections—viz., 1. That of those detained awaiting trial and those undergoing punishment ("*Celles des prevenues et condamnées*"); 2. That of debauched women enrolled as prostitutes ("*Celle des filles de débauche inscrites sur les contrôles de la prostitution*"); to this section the infirmary is attached; 3. That of young girls detained by request of their parents ("*par voie de correction paternelle*"), or by authority of articles 66 and 67 of the Penal Code. The last-named are girls, says M. Lecour, "who having acted without discernment, and being under sixteen years of age, are acquitted, but who, by virtue of judgments, are detained a given time in a house of correction."

I incline to think that notwithstanding the erroneous inference with which Mr. Berkeley Hill rightly debits me, the reader who now makes a careful comparison of his statement with mine will conclude that mine is a much more truthful representation of all the facts of the matter than is that by means of which he has attempted to discredit it.

In concluding my observations on Mr. Berkeley Hill's Remark No. 1, I beg to suggest to him the probable reason why the total number of *détenues* in St. Lazaire is now, according to M. Lecour, only 1,100, whereas several years ago, according to Parent-Duchatelet and his editors, the total number was about 1,300. "Keeping within the limits of scrupulous moderation," says M. Lecour, "we may estimate the population of Paris prostitutes, which is being incessantly renewed, at 30,000;" and "it must be distinctly understood," he adds, "that these figures apply to the women who, on account of their habitual debauchery, are a danger to the public health, rather than to those clandestine prostitutes *en circulation*, and occupying themselves constantly in acts of allurements." Now notwithstanding the existence of this enormous crowd of prostitutes in Paris actually dangerous to the public health, and notwithstanding the fact that the general population is rapidly increasing, so impotent is the system of enforced sanitary surveillance, that while less than 4,000 of these women can be got under control, this compara-

tively small number is steadily lessening. This fact is decisively attested by the following figures also taken from M. Lecour's recent work.

Number of registered prostitutes in Paris, number "in circulation," and number of cases of punishment, during the five years ending 1869.

Years.	Total number of Registered Prostitutes.		Prostitutes "in circulation."		Cases of Punishment.
1865	...	4,225	...	3,313	3,267
1866	...	4,003	...	3,203	3,510
1867	...	3,861	...	3,167	3,032
1868	...	3,769	...	2,938	3,208
1869	...	3,731	...	2,782	2,597

On the 1st January the total number on the register had fallen to 3,656. Now such being the remarkable and steady decline in the number of registered prostitutes at Paris, it is not surprising that the aggregate population of St. Lazaire has also declined from 1,300 to 1,100 ; but it will be readily understood from what has been said that this decline does not indicate any decline in the amount of venereal disease ; it is, on the contrary, one of the signs and consequences of the great increase of clandestine prostitution which is going on, and which is the most fruitful source of that disease.

MR. BERKELEY HILL'S CRITICISM, NO. II.

"On page 50, the Westminster Reviewer says : 'Of all the women in the *maisons tolérées*, whether in Paris or its suburbs, there was an average of two in every 259 annually affected with syphilis during the five years in question.' (1850-1854.) '*But since 1854, the last year named in this table, the amount of syphilis among the women of the maisons tolérées in Paris and its suburbs has so increased, that in 1867 there were two cases of syphilis in every 100 women.*' The Reviewer also states that the proportion of syphilis among the women in private lodgings had increased from one in 289 in 1854, to one in 200 in 1867.

"M. Lecour is again the authority cited by the Reviewer for this statement.

"What that gentleman really says is on page 721 of the paper already cited—

"The report for the month of September, 1867, gives two cases of syphilis for every 100 women of the *maisons tolérées*, and one case in every 200 women in furnished lodgings.' Moreover, M. Lecour gives on this same page 721, only four lines further down, a table of the number of registered women found syphilitic, who he says are without exception (*sans aucune exception*) treated at St. Lazaire.

"This table gives the numbers of syphilitic women annually sent to that establishment from 1857 to 1866, and these numbers steadily fell year by year from 982 in 1857, to 277 in 1866. And on page 722 M. Lecour gives another table for the same period of 1857 to 1866, showing that the number of the women living in private lodgings (*maisons garnies*) who are found annually syphilitic, has not increased (134 in 1857,

112 in 1866), but the number of women living in *maisons tolérées* found syphilitic has steadily decreased from 933 in 1857, to 229 in 1866.

"Further, on page 727, is another table of the women arrested for clandestine prostitution during the same period of 1857-1866, which shows that while the number of women arrested has increased from 1,405 in 1857, to 1,988 in 1866, the number found syphilitic has remained *stationary*—namely, 434 in 1857, and 432 in 1866."

The first part of the first paragraph of the above passage, which Mr. Berkeley Hill quotes from me, he admits, I presume, to be correct. The second part he objects to. When I wrote it I had not the advantage of being able to refer directly to the paper by M. Lecour, and, therefore, was indebted for information, in so far as Paris is concerned, since the date of the third edition of Parent-Duchatelet's work, to the work of Dr. Jeannel, "*De la Prostitution dans les Grandes Villes*," published in 1868. In that work is the passage on which my statement, put in italics by Mr. Berkeley Hill, is founded. This passage, the existence of which is recognised by him, and which was written to show that the registered women in private lodgings are freer from venereal diseases than are those in the *maisons tolérées* is as follows: "I may mention, as the latest information on this point, that the report of the Medical Service of the Dispensary of September, 1867, gives 2 cases of syphilis in every 100 women of the *maisons tolérées*, and only 1 case in every 200 women living in private lodgings." I therefore stated exactly, neither more nor less, what this passage authorised me to state. Dr. Jeannel gives the table supplied by M. Lecour, and referred to by Mr. Berkeley Hill, in which the actual numbers of syphilitic women annually sent for treatment to St. Lazaire are stated from 1857 to 1866 inclusive; but though the numbers of women living in *maisons tolérées*, and of those living in private lodgings who were found syphilitic, are stated separately, the number of medical visits to the women of each class is not given separately, therefore the data from which the *proportion* of each class found syphilitic could be ascertained were wanting. Had the requisite facts been accessible, I should have stated the average annual proportion of syphilitic women among registered and unregistered prostitutes in Paris and its suburbs during those years, as I have stated it, at page 50 of the article in question, for the years 1845 to 1854 inclusive. I regret that even in his recently published work M. Lecour has not given this information; but he has given some valuable information, which Mr. Hill, as he is acquainted with that work, might very appropriately have given at the end of the two last paragraphs which I have quoted from him.

Without considering separately the registered women living in

maisons tolérées, and those living in private lodgings, I can state on the authority of M. Lecour, that during the last three years the proportion of registered prostitutes found syphilitic has been increasing; and though Mr. Hill says that of the clandestine prostitutes arrested during the years 1857—1866, “the number found syphilitic has remained stationary,” the proportion found syphilitic has steadily and greatly increased since 1866. The following table, copied from M. Lecour’s book, attests the truth of both these statements :—

Table showing the proportion of registered and unregistered prostitutes found syphilitic during the years 1866—1869.

			Registered.				Unregistered.
1866	...	1 syphilitic in	137·061	...	1 syphilitic in	4·60	
1867	...	1 ”	78·432	...	1 ”	3·63	
1868	...	1 ”	61·485	...	1 ”	3·19	
1869	...	1 ”	59·913	...	1 ”	2·36	

It must be observed, that in respect to *registered* prostitutes, 1866 was an extraordinarily favourable year. The two previous years were as follows: 1864, 1 syphilitic in 88·759; 1865, 1 syphilitic in 93·692.

I must also observe that it appears as if the data from which the proportion of prostitutes syphilitic is calculated by M. Lecour, have either been collected or dealt with in a manner different from that which was adopted by Parent-Duchatelet or his editors. Their tables end with 1854, and M. Lecour’s begin with 1855, and extend over the whole period, until the end of 1869. Now, on comparing the former with the latter, I notice that according to the statements of each, the proportion of registered prostitutes found syphilitic each year during the 10 years ending with 1854 was *so very much* smaller than it has been during each of the 15 years subsequent, that I am compelled to conclude that a large part of the difference at least must be an apparent, and not a real one. This circumstance, however, does not affect the statement made above, that during 1867-1868 and 1869, there has been a positive increase in the proportion of registered prostitutes in Paris who are syphilitic.

MR. BERKELEY HILL’S CRITICISM NO. III.

“On page 49 the Westminster Reviewer gives a series of figures of the admissions at the two venereal hospitals, Lourcine and Mili, during the years 1851—1855, these figures showing a steady increase year by year at both these hospitals :—

		1851.			1855.
Lourcine	...	1,102	...	1,384	
Midi	...	3,019	...	3,632	

"M. Lecour has within the last few weeks published a larger work on the same subject ('*La Prostitution à Paris et à Londres.*' Paris, Asselin, 1870). On page 86 of this work he gives the number of venereal patients admitted in 1867 and 1868 to these two hospitals, Lourcine and Midi. They were :—

		1867.		1868.
Lourcine	...	1,030	...	1,024
Midi	...	3,226	...	3,185

Consequently, notwithstanding the growth of Paris, and the increased facilities of communication in seventeen years, the number of patients admitted to the first of these hospitals is actually lower than (according to the Westminster Reviewer) it was in 1851, and at the second, lower than it was in 1852, according to the same author. Nor has the diminution been caused by the reception of this class of patients into general hospitals, for no change in the mode of distributing the patients in the Paris hospitals has taken place since 1855.

"The Reviewer states (page 48) that a large number of syphilitic patients are treated surreptitiously in the general hospitals, an absurdity patent to any one familiar with the Parisian system of hospital administration, and easily refuted. M. Lecour (page 86) gives the number of syphilitic patients admitted into each of the general hospitals at Paris in 1867 and 1868. They altogether numbered 1,403 in 1867, and 1,551 in 1868."

It is to be regretted that M. Lecour has not given the number of patients admitted during a larger number of consecutive years than 2; for seeing that during the 5 years, 1851-55 inclusive, there was a great and gradual increase in the number of admissions to both hospitals, it would have been satisfactory to have learnt whether the numbers of admissions in 1867-68 were exceptionally low, or whether the fall from 1855 has been gradual. In any case, however, I was warranted in pointing to the fact of the increase, which took place prior to 1856, as one tending to support my main argument; but, of course, if a larger experience does not justify me in availing myself of that fact, as I have done, I cheerfully abandon it. I must, however, add a few words of comment to those of Mr. Berkeley Hill, on the statistical facts in question. I am by no means sure, as he is, that the diminution in the number of admissions to the Lourcine and Midi during 1867-68 has not "been caused by the reception of this class of patients into general hospitals;" neither am I sure, as he is, that "no change in the mode of distributing the [venereal] patients in the Paris hospitals has taken place since 1855." I have the high authority of M. Le Fort for stating that syphilitic patients are now freely admitted into the general hospitals of Paris; now, if they are, such patients are especially likely, as it seems to me, to seek admission to those hospitals rather than go to the Lourcine or to the Midi, inasmuch as their mere presence at either of those special hospitals marks them as contaminated

with venereal disease, and I need scarcely observe that there are very few of those who are thus contaminated who are not anxious to conceal the fact as completely as possible. Now, this consideration, combined with M. Le Fort's positive assertion that he does not know a single instance in which a syphilitic patient habitually residing in Paris has been refused admission to one of the general hospitals of that city, leads me to think that the recent diminution in the number of admissions to the Lourcine and the Midi has really "been caused by the reception of this class of patients into general hospitals;" and the information supplied by M. Lecour seems to me strongly confirmatory of this opinion: he says that during 1868, while 1,024 venereal patients were admitted to the Lourcine, and 3,185 to the Midi, 1,551, or *considerably more than a fourth of the whole*, were treated in the general hospitals; and I may add that those hospitals admitted 148 more syphilitic patients in 1868 than they admitted in 1867.

That formerly it was not so easy for venereal patients to get into the general hospitals, and that when they did get in they did so notwithstanding the existence of rules which interdicted their admission, seems evident from the following words of Parent-Duchatelet, which I translate literally from page 82, vol. ii., of the third edition of his work, published in 1857: "Although the rules interdict it, a good number of patients, of women especially, succeed in obtaining admittance and treatment in the ordinary hospitals. These admissions almost always take place as cases of *urgency*—that is to say, at the hospital itself, either by the physicians, at the consultation, or by the *internes* in the course of the day.

"As they constitute an exception, and, indeed, an infraction of the rule, the papers (*billets*) which authorise them do not indicate the real nature of the malady, for this indication would be a cause of refusal on the part of the directors. The papers ordinarily bear the designation *fever*, by the aid of which every patient may be admitted without difficulty, and without awakening the attention of the administration."

After explaining the motives which "determine these irregular admissions" of patients, who "are almost all of the female sex," Parent-Duchatelet observes: "The patients of whom we speak very much prefer the ordinary hospitals, because they there enjoy more liberty, receive the visits of their friends and acquaintances, and are objects of attentive care. Confounded without distinction with all the other patients, they can dissimulate the nature of their disease in the eyes of persons outside the hospital, and thus escape the moral blot resulting from a residence more or less prolonged in the Lourcine, where the seclusion is more rigorous, and the regulations are much more severe."

Now, if what Parent-Duchatelet says in these words was true when he wrote them, and if what M. Le Fort now says is true, venereal patients do gain admission to the ordinary hospitals in Paris at the present time much more easily than they did formerly, and I am therefore warranted in saying—*first*, that supposing the amount of venereal disease there to have increased of late years, it may easily do so without increasing the number of admissions into the Lourcine and the Midi; and, *second*, that, contrary to the assertion of Mr. Berkeley Hill, “a change in the mode of distributing the patients in the Paris hospitals *has* taken place since 1855,” inasmuch as before that date venereal patients intent on getting into the ordinary hospitals were obliged to resort to some form of *ruse*, or stratagem, in order to do so, whereas now they have only to apply for admission and the doors are opened to them.

But if, as Mr. Hill asserts, there has been no change, then either M. Le Fort, one of the Paris hospital surgeons, or Parent-Duchatelet, together with his editors, MM. Trebuchet and Poirat-Duval, is guilty of falsehood in this matter. Now, excepting the prostitutes in St. Lazaire, as more than a fourth of all the venereal patients who are treated in the Paris hospitals are treated as M. Lecour shows, in the general hospitals, M. Le Fort's assertion looks very like truth; on the other hand, often as I have heard and seen Parent-Duchatelet's statements referred to, I have never heard or seen any word impugning his veracity, and as his editors possessed the amplest opportunities of testing the accuracy of his statements, as it was their duty to do so, as they seem to have discharged their editorial duties with peculiar care and faithfulness, and as they leave their author's words untouched, and uncommented on, I believe them to be true, and therefore am compelled to believe that Mr. Berkeley Hill's assertion is not true. Moreover, if Parent-Duchatelet's words are true, and if, as Mr. Berkeley Hill says, no change in respect to the admission of patients in the Paris hospitals has taken place since 1855, then the resort to ruse or stratagem by patients in order to get into the ordinary hospitals described by Parent-Duchatelet, and characterised by Mr. Hill as “an absurdity patent to any one familiar with the Parisian system,” must still be practised in Paris. Mr. Hill can choose which horn of the dilemma is most agreeable to him.

Mr. Berkeley Hill concludes his “Remarks” by saying:—“It is not for a moment to be inferred that the preceding paragraphs are intended to defend or uphold the ‘French system’ *in toto*, but simply to show that it effectually checks disease.” English people have prejudices, and when a reformer runs counter to them he is apt to verify that wise old Hebrew saying,—“It is hard to

kick against the pricks;" and the English people have very strong prejudices against the "French system" of dealing with prostitution; therefore Mr. Hill judiciously anticipates their apprehensions, assures them there is no reason for alarm, and that they must not for a moment think he intends to "defend or uphold the 'French system' *in toto*." But I wish he had told them in what respect he does not uphold or defend the French system. I know one respect in which that system, when first introduced in 1864, excited English prejudices most especially—viz., the practice of giving to each prostitute, after she is found free from venereal disease, a certificate that she is so. English people looked on that certificate as what they call "a licence to sin;" and however much they may be guilty of "sin" itself, they still have prejudices against giving it, by authority of an Act of Parliament, the sort of formal sanction which that certificate implies. They think there is more than meets the eye in even mere "make-believe" goodness; and hence their great respect for that much maligned, though happily omnipresent, custom of English society—hypocrisy, the practice of which they exact from each other as the homage which it behoves vice to pay to virtue. Now the idea of granting a Parliamentary "license to sin" runs athwart the whole texture of these strong and immemorially ancient feelings. Fortunately the promoters of the Contagious Diseases Acts perceived this at an early stage of their proceedings, and in order to allay the rising anger of the British public, they ordained by the Act of 1866 that the certificate should no longer be given to the prostitute herself, but to the superintendent of police. By this simple expedient, you see, Sir, the "homage" exacted by British prejudices is duly rendered, and yet at the same time, as British youth in the "protected" districts quickly learn that no prostitute can show herself in public unless a certificate of her freedom from venereal disease is in the pocket of the superintendent, it answers its purpose quite as well as if it were in the pocket of the girl herself. It is obvious, therefore, that the system as now amended, is much better adapted to the English feelings than is the French system "pure and simple," and that Mr. Berkeley Hill shows true wisdom in not defending or upholding the "'French system' *in toto*."

There is also another valid reason why Mr. Berkeley Hill prefers the improved English system. M. Le Fort, speaking of the French system, and looking admiringly and longingly on ~~the~~ *the Com* system, says, complainingly, "The benefit of our preventive measures is thwarted by the fact that they can be rarely applied to women under age, the father opposing the inscription of his daughter if a minor, and refusing to have her examined;" but an Act of Parliament easily surmounts such difficulties as these, and

the Contagious Diseases Acts place prostitutes of all ages—minors as well as adults—in the power of the English medical inspectors and police; so that the reclamations by English fathers opposing the subjection of their daughters, even though minors, to the English system of enforced periodical medical examination, and to the degrading *regime* of the police, are simply ignored. Thus, you see, Sir, that in this respect also, the English system is far superior to the French; and therefore, for this reason also, Mr. Hill will not for a moment “defend or uphold the ‘French system’ *in toto*.”

But after all, Sir, these several points to which I have now alluded, are minor points; and, in drawing me into a discussion of them, Mr. Berkeley Hill is directing public attention from the main question, which is,—whether the amount of disease which is indirectly developed through the agency of the clandestine prostitution resulting from the system of enforced sanitary surveillance, is not far greater than is the amount which is prevented by means of that system? I affirm that it is. Even supposing venereal disease could be completely or almost “stamped out” in respect to the prostitutes under control, yet the price paid for this advantage would have to be so great, that all shrewd calculators would, I feel sure, object to pay it. Prostitutes of every grade so abhor the practice of an enforced medical examination at frequent intervals whether they are well or ill, that they will make almost any sacrifice to escape it, and therefore, wherever it exists they resort to secret prostitution, and continue to practice it even while they are diseased, rather than, by applying to medical charities, run the risk of allowing themselves to be detected and arrested as clandestine prostitutes. And so long as human nature is what it is, this always must be the case; and the whole of the statistical facts in M. Lecour’s instructive little book constitute a series of striking proofs and illustrations of this cardinal truth. In summing up those facts in respect to the actual state of prostitution in Paris, he says:—

“Each category of these figures has undergone a considerable change of either decrease or increase, a change the significance of which is indubitable (*absolue*), and which, for a period of fifteen years, denotes the following results:—

“1. Diminution of entries on the prostitution-register: in 1855 they rose to 611; in 1869 they amounted to only 370.

“2. Diminution of the number of *maisons de tolérance*: in 1855 there were 204; in 1869 there were only 152.

“3. Diminution of the number of girls in these houses: from 1855 to 1860 the average number was 1,935; in 1869 the number had fallen to 1,206.

“4. Increase of the number of girls living in private lodgings

(*isolés*) : there were 2,429 in 1855 ; but in 1869 there were 2,525.

"5. Considerable increase of the number of clandestine prostitutes (*insoumises*) : this point cannot be contested.

"6. Confirmation of the fact that a large proportion of the clandestine prostitutes are suffering from syphilis or other contagious affections : the sanitary statistics prove that of these prostitutes 1 in 2·36 is syphilitic.

"All these results are inter-dependent or bound up with each other (*solidaires*). They demonstrate that prostitution augments, and that it becomes more dangerous to the public health."

"Are the efforts of the police in this matter relaxed ? No ; but the performance of their duties has become more difficult. All the details which I have given prove that the police have vigorously organised their means of supervision, of sanitary control, and of repression : in 1855 the number of clandestine prostitutes arrested was only 1,323 ; but in 1869 the number was 1,999."

After adducing further evidence of the resolute activity of the police, M. Lecour continues,—“These figures are conclusive. It remains then established that the Administration has redoubled its activity, that it has multiplied its acts of repression in respect to prostitutes, and that it has in fact succeeded in maintaining in satisfactory conditions the sanitary state of *registered* prostitutes.

"But, on the other hand, we see a continuous diminution of the number of these registered prostitutes: the total number of whom in 1855 was 4,257, whereas in 1869 it had fallen to 3,731, and on January 1, 1870, was only 3,656.

"This fact is the more important, because it corresponds to a notable augmentation of clandestine prostitution.

"Here is a social evil which must be thoroughly recognised, and which no measures resorted to by the police can alone suffice to destroy.

"The world of prostitution—both establishments and personal—is undergoing a transformation. The number of *maisons de tolérance* lessens : it will always go on lessening. As speculative enterprises these houses offer scarcely any advantages now, and they would disappear if they were not resorted to by travellers, soldiers, and workmen. It would be a grave error to suppose that on behalf of public morality this fact constitutes a reason for rejoicing, for it is due only to a simple change of form. Nowadays men search for adventure at the great risk of their health, and in many cases, of their tranquillity. It is a question of vanity and luxury on an immoral, unwholesome, ground. Instead of the transient contact which, in the *maison tolérée*, or in the apartment of the *fille isolée*, is only a kind of material contamination,

the danger of which the Administration strives to reduce, a chance meeting is preferred, where it is imagined possible to play a better rôle at a slight expense; and thus men throw themselves into the arms, always stretched out, of clandestine prostitution, which diffuses the syphilitic poison.

"The *maisons de tolérance* vanish, but it is only to reappear in forms which augment the risks to health without being less scandalous at the same time. If the police, always on the watch, opposed no obstacle, we should see these places of debauchery reappear and multiply in the guise of perfumery, drapery, or glove businesses, as they formerly abounded. Nothing can be more dangerous, from every point of view, than these prostitution-establishments in disguise. They induce a moral decline which, without their special facility, would not occur, and they constitute real snarcs for young girls who, as work-girls or otherwise, seek employ, and who soon prostitute themselves without their families being aware of it.

"In the actual state of things, voluntary registration becomes more rare, and, which is serious, *an opiated resistance to it which was not seen formerly is being produced*. Girls dismissed from the *maisons tolérées* when these are closed, or who leave these houses voluntarily, precipitate themselves into the category of filles isolées, who, in their turn, resort to every possible expedient in order to withdraw themselves from the action of the police, and to swell the crowd of clandestine prostitutes (*insoumises*).

"I have already spoken of the latter. I have adverted to their number always increasing, to their audacity, and to the danger attending them. *It is in this continual augmentation that the Administration concerned with the police and the medical supervision of prostitutes finds the difficulties of the present situation.*"

It thus appears that while, according to the high authority of M. Le Fort,* Paris has become "*the brothel of Europe*," it has become at the same time (according to M. Lecour, than whose authority none can be higher) *an extremely dangerous one too*.

In presence of the official and reliable evidence I have now adduced, I feel confident that the verdict of all impartial readers will be that, considered as a whole, the more the facts and arguments contained in my article which Mr. Berkeley Hill has attacked, are weighed and examined, the more truthful and convincing they will be found. I am, Sir, yours truly,

JOHN CHAPMAN, M.D.

London, 25 Somerset street, W.

* *Medical Times and Gazette*, January 8, 1870.

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